



Bonds for Capital Improvements

Facts at a Glance

What are the bonds for?

The bonds to be voted on by the citizens of the County would be used to pay for needed water, transportation, recreation, and public safety projects. Capital items are defined as projects, equipment, or land that are costly and last a long time. These large projects are not a part of the day-to-day operations of the County and require special funding. Just as a homeowner might need to secure a loan for an addition to his house, the County must borrow money to pay for these expensive projects.

How is the County proposing to pay for these improvements?

General Obligation (GO) Bonds are a way for states and local governments to borrow money to pay for major public projects, typically that serve the entire community. These projects are important to the quality of life of the community. Borrowing through bonds allows the substantial cost of the projects to be spread out over a longer period of time, making them more manageable financially for all citizens. The bonds are backed by the full faith and credit of the issuing government, and are paid back to bond holders with interest over a predetermined number of years. An advantage of bond financing is that people moving into the County after the bonds are issued will contribute to the payment of these bonds.

How were the improvement projects selected?

We listened to you! Projects were initially recommended by staff and reviewed by Commissioners. Public meetings were then held, citizens' requests were received, and the Commission incorporated your vision for Columbia County into a list of projects that serves the needs of all residents.

Why now?

These projects are needed now to continue the level of services we all enjoy. Doing them now is also more cost-effective than waiting until the situation worsens and the cost of land, materials, and labor has increased. If these projects are not funded now with GO bonds, then the next opportunity to fund them will not be until the 2011 SPLOST (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) program. We are in a unique position now of being able to borrow money at a lower interest rate to offset the escalating cost of land, materials, and labor.

Why aren't there County funds to do these major infrastructure projects?

Individuals and businesses from time to time must deal with significant expenditures that are outside what they have available every month to cover basic expenses, and they often borrow money for such projects. As with most local governments, the County maintains its infrastructure through its annual operating budget but does not have adequate funds beyond this to replace or significantly expand its infrastructure. In these situations, the County must borrow money by issuing bonds.

How do these projects benefit citizens?

Everyone in the County will benefit in some way from the water, transportation, recreation, and public safety projects. For example, many will have lower homeowner's insurance rates with the addition of new fire stations, equipment, and training facilities.

How much will it cost a property owner?

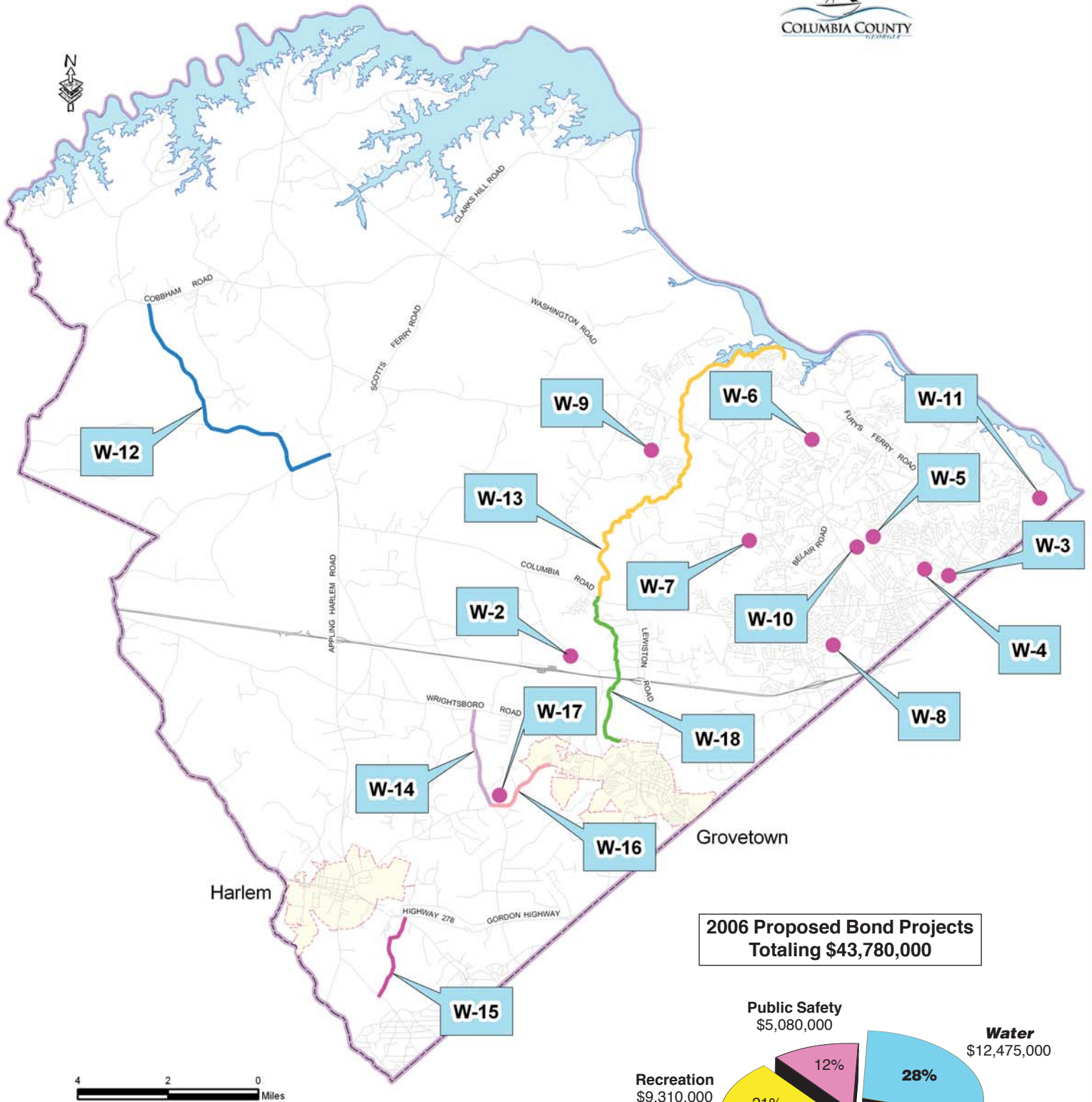
Based on the property's valuation, payment of the bonds will cost the owner 11¢ per day for each \$100,000 of value. The table below provides detail for each of the project categories.

	Project and Capitalized Interest Cost	Percent of Total	Millage Required	Cost per year per \$100,000 Property at 40% Assessed Value
Water	\$12,475,000	28.5%	0.285 mills	\$11.40
Transportation	\$16,915,000	38.6%	0.386 mills	\$15.44
Recreation	\$ 9,310,000	21.3%	0.213 mills	\$ 8.52
Public Safety	\$ 5,080,000	11.6%	0.116 mills	\$ 4.64
TOTAL	\$43,780,000	100.00%	1.000 mills	\$40.00

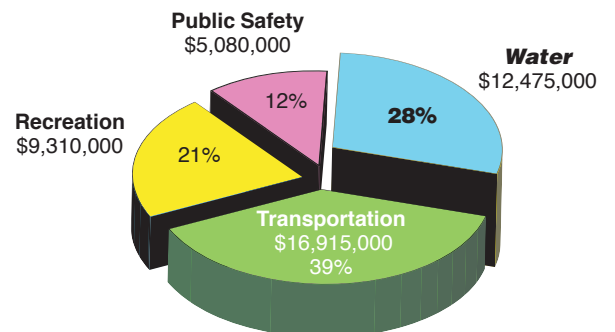
When is the referendum vote?

Citizens will have the opportunity to vote in the November 7th election for each category of projects.

Bonds for Capital Improvements Water Projects



**2006 Proposed Bond Projects
Totaling \$43,780,000**



Legend

- centerlines
- City

**Capital Improvements
Water Related**

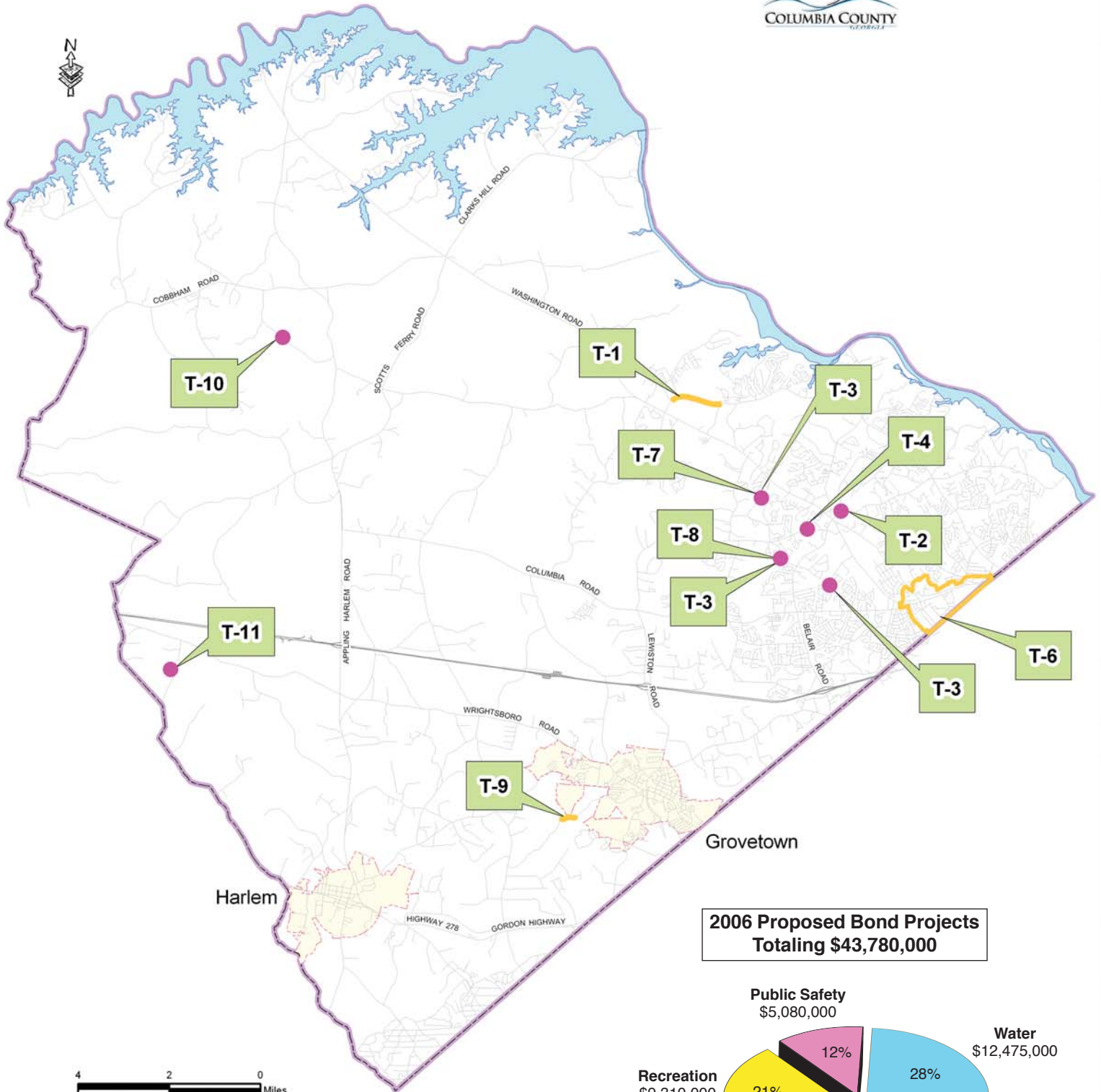
Columbia County Capital Improvements Plan

Master List of Water Projects

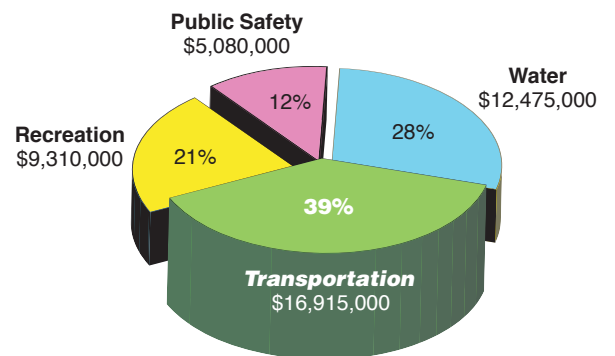
August 7, 2006

Project Type	Project Number	Project Description	Estimated Bond Funding
Master Plan	W-1	Master plan for the Stormwater Utility Service Area - Identify and establish required improvements for storm drainage infrastructure as it pertains to both water quantity and water quality.	\$520,000
Facility	W-2	Stormwater Maintenance facility - Establish a maintenance facility to be located on the Water Utility campus on Chamblin Road to house personnel and equipment for the Stormwater Utility.	\$750,000
Stream Restoration	W-3	Petersburg Station Subdivision - Correct existing and prevent future erosion along the Wynngate tributary to include drainage pipe replacement, stream bank reinforcement, and vegetative restoration.	\$600,000
Stream Restoration	W-4	Wynngate Subdivision - Correct existing and prevent future erosion along the Wynngate tributary to include drainage pipe replacement, stream bank reinforcement, and vegetative restoration.	\$700,000
Stream Restoration	W-5	Halifax Subdivision - Correct existing and prevent future erosion along the Reed Creek tributary to include stream bank reinforcement, and vegetative restoration.	\$300,000
Stream Restoration	W-6	Betty's Branch - Correct existing and prevent future erosion along the Betty's Branch tributary to include stream bank reinforcement, and vegetative restoration.	\$1,000,000
Drainage	W-7	La Vista Drive - Install 760 feet of 48" drainage pipe to improve storm flow through the La Vista Drive area.	\$250,000
Flood control	W-8	Ridge Crossing, Phase II A - Initiate engineering studies and land surveys in the Spring Lakes Area to improve storm drainage at the head of the Reed Creek tributary. Funds from the Stormwater Utility will be used for the balance of the \$2.5 million project.	\$935,000
Flood control	W-9	William Few Parkway - Implement drainage improvements along Long Branch tributary adjacent to William Few Parkway and Windmill Subdivision.	\$300,000
Regional Retention	W-10	Mullins Pond regional retention for the Reed Creek Basin - Dredge the pond, remove and rebuild the dam, and install flood control devices and velocity dissipaters. The facility would function as an active regional retention pond on the upper portion of the Reed Creek tributary which will minimize the impact of storm flows and velocities downstream of Old Evans Road. Total cost of project estimated to be \$4 million; additional funding will come from the Stormwater Utility and the insurance premium tax.	\$1,000,000
Restoration	W-11	Bowen Pond - Remove sedimentation from this County-owned pond, install a silt collection structure, and initiate stream restoration.	\$1,000,000
Water Line	W-12	Dozier Road - Install 12" water main to provide water service in the Cobbham, White Oak, and Ray Owens Roads area. The 37,500 feet of water main are to be installed primarily in the County right-of-way.	\$1,500,000
Sanitary Sewer	W-13	Euchee Creek Drainage Basin - Install approximately 22,000 feet of 36" sewer and approximately 26,200 feet of 21" sewer line. This project is located in the Little River Wastewater Treatment Plant service area and has demonstrated significant potential for residential development. The entire project will cost \$7 million, and the Water Utility will fund the remaining \$6 million.	\$1,000,000
Water Line	W-14	Water line - Acquire 10" water line and booster pump station from Harlem between Wrightsboro and Harlem-Grovetown Roads.	\$286,000
Water Line	W-15	Water line - Construct water line to serve G.R. Tucker and Old Blythe Roads to provide water service to residents south of the City of Harlem.	\$122,000
Water Line	W-16	Water line - Construct 11,000 feet of water line on Old Louisville Road to improve reliability of water service to the Cities of Harlem and Grovetown and surrounding areas.	\$286,000
Water Tank	W-17	Water storage tank - Build a 500,000 gallon elevated water storage tank to serve the Cities of Grovetown and Harlem and County systems.	\$700,000
Sanitary Sewer	W-18	Sanitary sewer line - Install 5,000 feet of 15" sanitary sewer line to increase sewer capacity to the City of Grovetown and surrounding areas.	\$609,000
		Water Projects Total:	\$11,858,000
		Capitalized Interest:	\$617,000
		Total Cost:	\$12,475,000
Further information is also available on our website at www.columbiacountyga.gov . If you have any questions, please feel free to call 706-868-3379 or e-mail us at bondinfo@columbiacountyga.gov .			

Bonds for Capital Improvements Transportation Projects



**2006 Proposed Bond Projects
Totaling \$43,780,000**



Legend

- centerlines
- City
- Capital Improvements Transportation Related

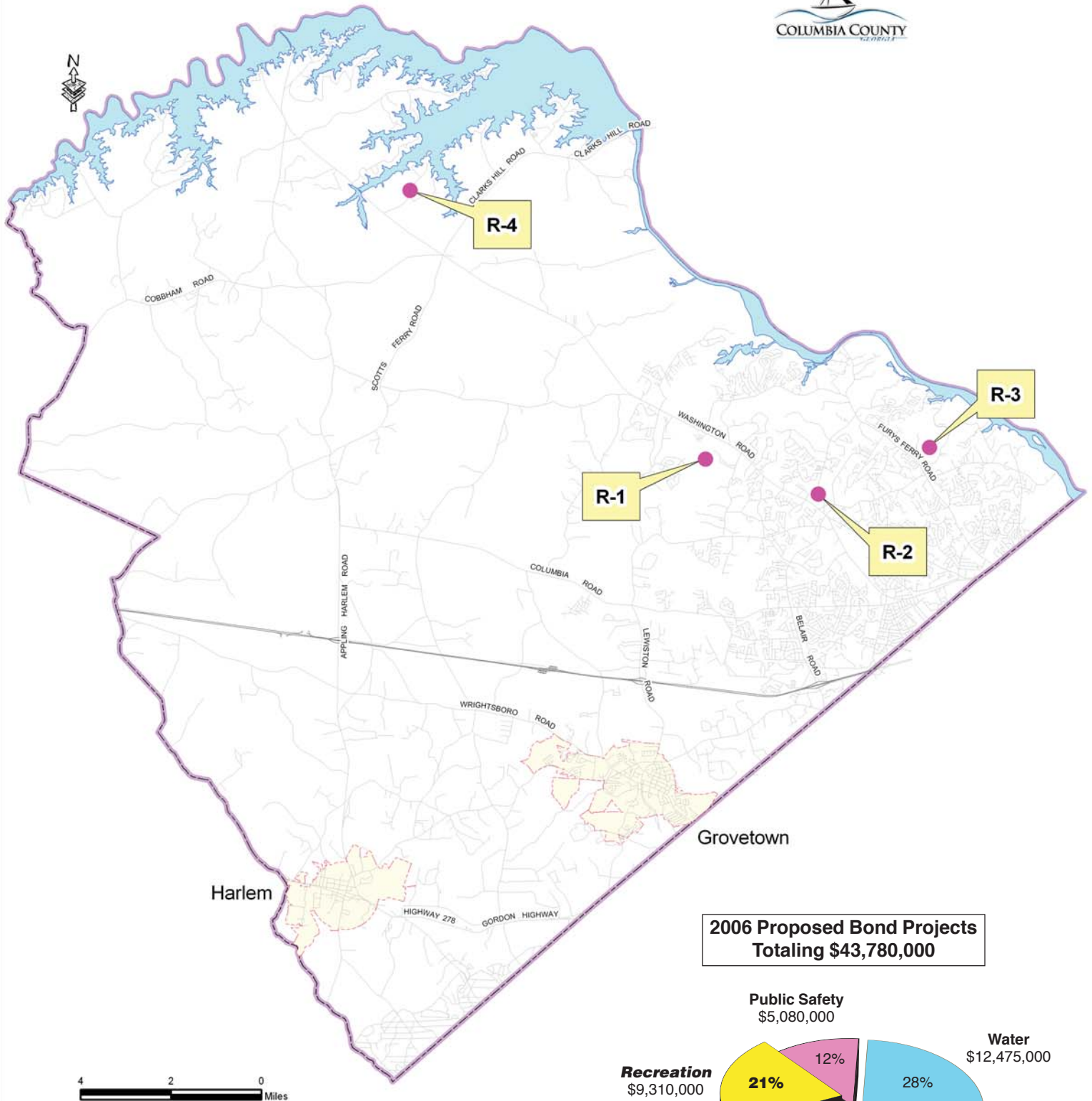
Columbia County Capital Improvements Plan

Master List of Transportation Projects

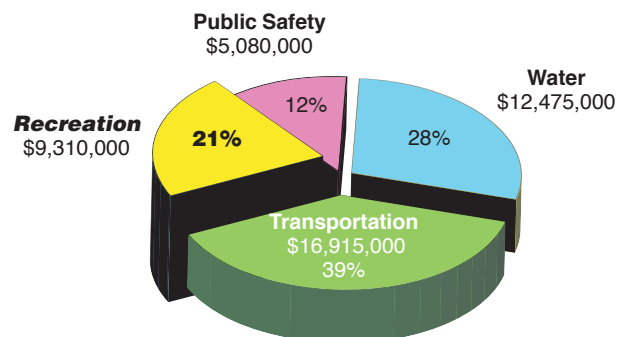
August 7, 2006

Project Type	Project Number	Project Description	Estimated Bond Funding
Road Improvement	T-1	William Few Extension - Fund the right-of-way acquisition and utility relocation to construct a 3-lane road with a bike lane and a bridge over Euchee Creek to connect Hardy McManus to William Few. The County is funding the design using SPLOST funds, and GDOT will fund the construction. By the County performing this work, the County anticipates receiving over \$11 million from GDOT for the construction.	\$546,120
Road Improvement	T-2	Industrial Park Drive - Widen road from 3 to 5 lanes from Washington Road to Evans-to-Locks Road. In addition, this project will improve the intersection of Washington/Belair/Industrial Park Drive.	\$4,928,000
Road Improvement	T-3	Owens, Cox and Gibbs Roads - Fund the design to widen the loop of Owens Road at Washington Road (at the Target Center) to Washington Road at Gibbs Road north of Evans to a 3-lane road. By the County performing this work, the County anticipates receiving over \$14 million from GDOT to pay for the construction.	\$712,404
Road Improvement	T-4	Hereford Farm Road - Fund the design for widening from Gibbs Road to Belair Road to 3 lanes. By the County performing this work, the County anticipates receiving over \$4 million from GDOT to pay for the construction.	\$211,706
Road Improvement	T-5	Transportation projects to support school construction - Assist the Board of Education with infrastructure needs associated with school construction such as turn lanes, intersection improvements, and sidewalk construction.	\$2,500,000
Road Improvement	T-6	Martinez Area Redevelopment - Install transportation improvements in the Rose Lane/Marsella Avenue/Settlement Road areas to include road realignments, extensions, and streetscapes.	\$2,500,000
		Subtotal:	\$11,398,230
Sidewalk	T-7	Gibbs Road/Evans Elementary School - Construct a sidewalk on Gibbs Road for school foot traffic from La Pointe to Park Ridge.	\$384,000
Sidewalk	T-8	Cox Road/Evans High School - Construct a sidewalk to Evans High School from Hereford Farm Road to Belair Road.	\$556,000
		Subtotal:	\$940,000
Dirt Road Paving	T-9	Creek crossing - Construct a 2-lane all-weather culvert on Reynolds Farm Road (Country Road 259) to provide a safe creek crossing for residents and emergency response vehicles.	\$358,000
Dirt Road Paving	T-10	Crawford Place Road (County Road 78) - Pave from SR 150 to Ray Owens Road to create a paved connection between Cobbham and Ray Owens Roads. With the realignment of the intersection to align with Yelton Road, this road will provide an alternative corridor for the western area of Columbia County.	\$2,084,000
Dirt Road Paving	T-11	Hinton Wilson Road (County Road 93) - Pave from County Line Road to Wrightsboro Road to provide a paved roadway connection between County Line to Wrightsboro Roads.	\$1,301,000
		Subtotal:	\$3,743,000
		Transportation Projects Total:	\$16,081,230
		Capitalized Interest:	\$833,770
		Total Cost:	\$16,915,000
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Further information is also available on our website at www.columbiacountyga.gov. If you have any questions, please feel free to call 706-868-3379 or e-mail us at bondinfo@columbiacountyga.gov.</p> </div>			

Bonds for Capital Improvements Recreation Projects



**2006 Proposed Bond Projects
Totaling \$43,780,000**



Legend

— centerlines
 City

**Capital Improvements
Recreation Related**

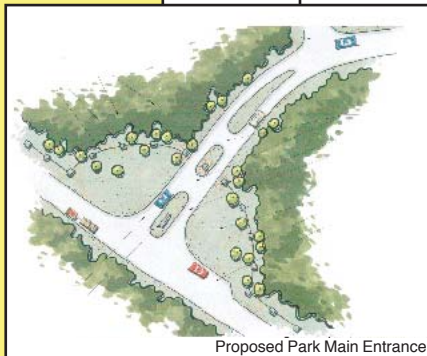
Columbia County Capital Improvements Plan

Master List of Recreation Projects

August 7, 2006

Project Type	Project Number	Project Description	Estimated Bond Funding
Recreation	R-1	Blanchard Woods Park - Acquire land for additional fields and facilities to meet future needs.	\$2,300,000
Recreation	R-2	Evans Town Center Park - Fund the purchase of property and provide restroom facilities, power and water lines, lighting, and minimal parking to enhance the current open space.	\$4,800,000
Recreation	R-3	Blackstone Camp Road Park - Acquire land and install park improvements for passive recreation as well as a proposed tennis complex.	\$250,000
Recreation	R-4	Wildwood Park - Construct road and install utility improvements so park can better accommodate large events and tournaments.	\$1,500,000
		Recreation Projects Total:	\$8,850,000
		Capitalized Interest:	\$460,000
		Total Cost:	\$9,310,000

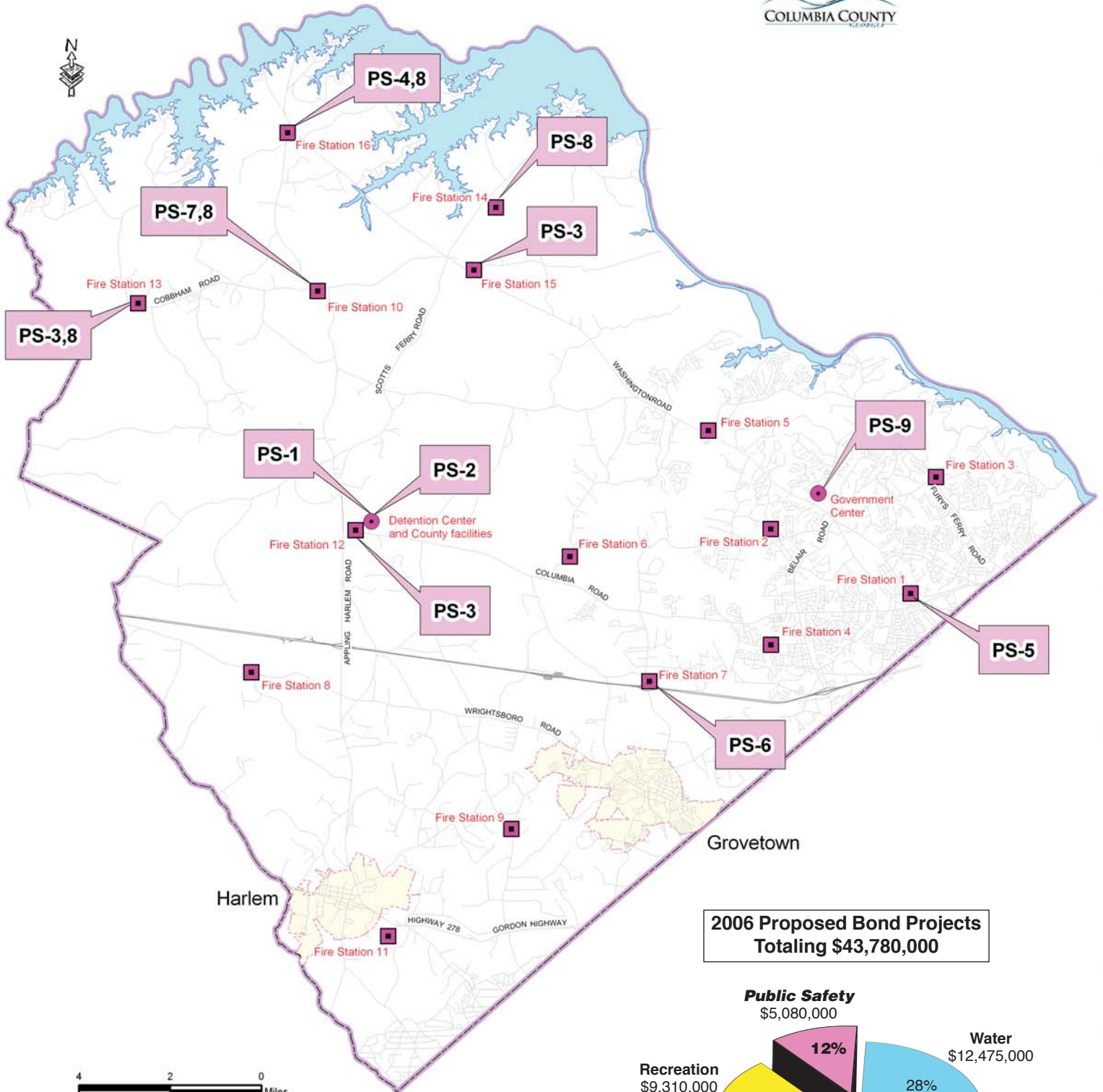
Evans Town Center Park Site



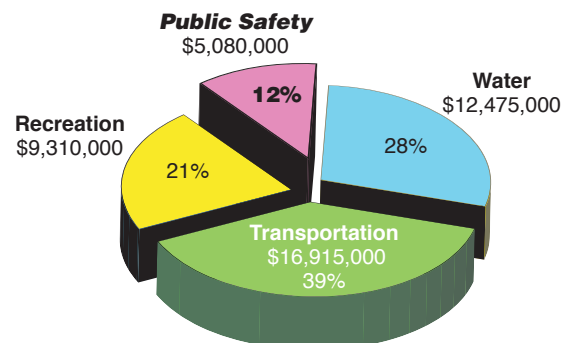
Proposed Wildwood Park Improvements

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Bonds for Capital Improvements Public Safety Projects



**2006 Proposed Bond Projects
Totaling \$43,780,000**



Legend

- centerlines
- City
- Capital Improvements Public Safety Related

Columbia County Capital Improvements Plan

Master List of Public Safety Projects

August 7, 2006

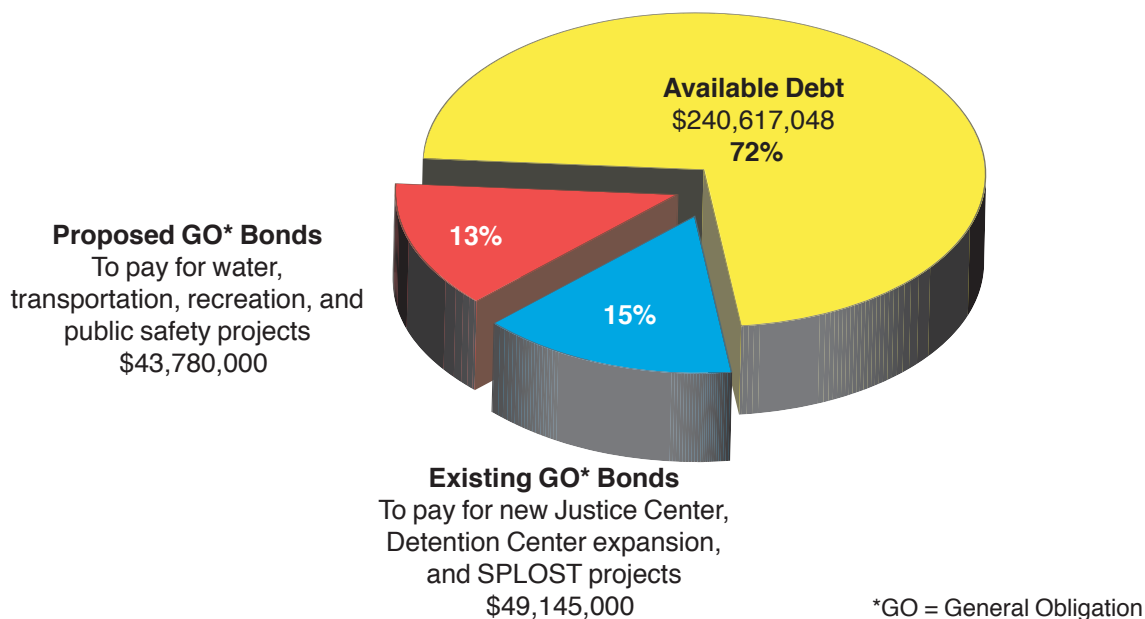
Project Type	Project Number	Project Description	Estimated Bond Funding
Sheriff Office/County	PS-1	Master plan - Develop master plan for future expansion of County facilities on Columbia Road site in Appling to include future expansion of the Sheriff's Administration Office, Detention Center, and training facilities as well as other County facilities.	\$140,000
Sheriff Office	PS-2	Training facility for Sheriff's Office - Construct a weapons training facility to improve safety and reduce risk management costs.	\$310,000
		Subtotal:	\$450,000
Fire	PS-3	Fire Department Training Center - Fund land acquisition, construct training center, and modify existing house on Columbia Road to be a new fire station. This project will provide for a centrally-located fully-staffed 24/7 fire station in the west end of the County, a training facility for firefighters, and a drafting pit for pump tests. This project also includes renovations to the #13 Winfield and #15 Burks Mountain Fire Stations.	\$775,000
Fire	PS-4	#16 Leah Fire Station - Fund land acquisition, construct a new station, and set up an immediate temporary fire truck bay and field office to provide a 24/7 staffed fire station at 3653 Ray Owens Road within a 5-mile radius of Ridge Road and other areas of Leah.	\$930,000
Fire	PS-5	Hazardous Materials Response Team (HMRT) items - Purchase equipment needed to establish a fully-trained 24/7 HazMat Response Team to allow for an immediate response to hazardous material incidents within Columbia County.	\$400,000
Fire	PS-6	Ladder truck for Martinez-Columbia Fire/Rescue - Purchase ladder truck to be housed at the #7 Sugar Creek Drive Fire Station to cover the industrial area and other wide-span multi-story facilities in the west side of the County including the Detention Center and hotels along I-20. It would also support the existing ladder truck in the event of a major fire in the Martinez/Evans area.	\$750,000
Fire	PS-7	Battalion Chief vehicle for the western and northern portion of the County - Purchase a specially outfitted vehicle as a first response unit with advanced life-saving equipment such as spare air tanks and a system to refill them, extrication tools, medical supplies, salvage covers, bolt cutters, axes, pry bars, air monitors, etc. This vehicle will be located at #10 Station on Ray Owens Road for 24/7 service.	\$120,000
Fire	PS-8	New Class A fire engines - Fund 4 new vehicles which would place a pumper in each new County fire station to meet increased call volume as well as the ISO requirement of having 1 reserve pumper for every 8 fire stations. Stations #10, #13, #14, and #16 will receive a new fire engine.	\$1,004,765
		Subtotal:	\$3,797,765
County Courts Operations	PS-9	Computer software, data conversion and user training - Acquire software, data conversion, and training for all County courts for day-to-day functions which include but are not limited to: simple/advanced search capabilities, event recording/scheduling, docket/calendar generation, warrants/return of service processing, disposition/case closing, post-disposition event tracking, receipting/cashier management, related bookkeeping/accounting functions, integrated document imaging, document/form generation, management/statistical reports, and role-based security.	\$400,000
		Subtotal:	\$400,000
		Public Safety Projects Total:	\$4,829,765
		Capitalized Interest:	\$250,235
		Total Cost:	\$5,080,000
<p>Further information is also available on our website at www.columbiacountyga.gov. If you have any questions, please feel free to call 706-868-3379 or e-mail us at bondinfo@columbiacountyga.gov.</p>			

Columbia County Has the Financial Strength to Support Bonds for Capital Improvements

Columbia County is in a good financial position and is fiscally strong enough to assume the indebtedness of the bonds.

- For the last eight years, Columbia County has been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). Out of 159 counties in Georgia, Columbia County was one of only 25 to receive this award. An award-winning CAFR possesses a high degree of reliability because it must be presented in conformity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and it must be audited in conformity with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards. This award demonstrates the superior financial accountability and fiscal responsibility of the County.
- Before the County could consider a bond referendum, it had to examine its financial health. In addition to our financial reporting abilities, our operating reserves and legal debt limit were reviewed. The County maintains an operating reserve of between 75 and 100 days, as recommended by bond rating agencies, to cover unexpected problems. This reserve allows the County to continue delivering services throughout the year without the need for short-term borrowing.
- The County currently utilizes only 15% of its legal debt limit. The legal debt limit is the total amount of general obligation debt the County can have outstanding at any one time. The proposed bond issue to fund the capital improvements plan is 13% of the County's legal debt limit. Therefore, the County can legally borrow the funds proposed in the referendum.
- Because of the County's proven excellence in financial accountability, high level of operating day reserve, and low amount of debt, the County has a bond rating of AA with Fitch and Standard and Poor's for its general obligation bonds. This favorable rating allows the County to borrow funds at lower interest rates.

Current and Proposed Debt vs Available Debt



Bonds for Capital Improvements

The Board of Commissioners is responsible for providing water, transportation, recreation, and public safety services to the citizens of Columbia County. These proposed capital improvement projects will enhance the County's ability to meet these needs as the County grows.

This Bond Program will:

- **Preserve water quality and expand water service**

Water projects on the CIP list will improve and enhance our creeks, streams, and drainage systems as well as add water and sewer lines to better serve the more rural areas of the County.

- **Improve roads across the County**

Transportation projects include funds for design and right-of-way for road construction as well as road widenings, intersection improvements, new school transportation needs, paving of two dirt roads, building of a creek crossing for emergency vehicles and school buses, and redevelopment of the Martinez commercial area. With the County performing this design, right-of-way, and utility work, Columbia County can expect to receive approximately \$29 million from the DOT to pay for these road improvements.

- **Enhance parks and recreation**

Recreation projects will include the purchase of land and will continue the "living" legacy of greenspace for our children and grandchildren to enjoy. The cost of property is rising quickly in the County, and prime park acreage is becoming more limited with increased residential and commercial development. These parks will continue to improve the quality of life for our citizens.

- **Expand public safety**

Public safety projects include fire station improvements, fire and law enforcement training facilities, equipment for a HazMat response team, and fire trucks to improve emergency services.

Sample Bond Referendum Ballot

The Columbia County General Obligation Bonds Referendum

1. Water Bonds

Shall General Obligation Bonds in the amount of \$12,475,000.00 be issued by Columbia County, Georgia to finance the cost of acquiring, constructing, improving and equipping certain water, sewerage and stormwater facilities and infrastructure, to prepare a master plan for the Stormwater Utility Service Area and to pay capitalized interest on such Bonds for a period not to exceed 13 months?

☐ YES
☐ NO

2. Transportation Bonds

Shall General Obligation Bonds in the amount of \$16,915,000.00 be issued by Columbia County, Georgia to finance the cost of planning, designing, constructing and improving streets, roads, bridges and sidewalks and to pay capitalized interest on such Bonds for a period not to exceed 13 months?

☐ YES
☐ NO

3. Recreation Bonds

Shall General Obligation Bonds in the amount of \$9,310,000.00 be issued by Columbia County, Georgia to finance the cost of planning, acquiring, constructing, improving and equipping park and recreational facilities and to pay capitalized interest on such Bonds for a period not to exceed 13 months?

☐ YES
☐ NO

4. Public Safety Bonds

Shall General Obligation Bonds in the amount of \$5,080,000.00 be issued by Columbia County, Georgia to finance the cost of acquiring, constructing and equipping public safety buildings and acquiring public safety equipment and to pay capitalized interest on such Bonds for a period not to exceed 13 months?

☐ YES
☐ NO

Your Understanding of the Issues is Critical



***L to R:** Board of Commision Members - Vice Chairman Steve Brown, Commissioner Diane Ford, Chairman Ron Cross, Commissioner Tom Mercer, and Commissioner Lee Anderson unanimously approved the bond referendum which would allow the citizens to vote for these needed projects.*

The projects planned under this bond program are large and expensive, but it is more cost-effective to do them now than it is to wait until the situation worsens and the cost of land, materials, and labor increase.

A sign of a great unified county is when citizens see beyond their own needs and understand and support the needs of the community. The community will benefit as a whole even though many of the specific projects will not directly impact every citizen in Columbia County. The projects to be financed by the bonds are presented as four groups or packages for the voters' consideration. Voters should consider them as such.

Our citizens have steadfastly supported their local government in the past and as a result have realized positive, quality projects from bond financing such as the new Library and Justice Center.

If all four categories of projects – Water, Recreation, Transportation, and Public Safety – are passed, it will cost the property owner an additional \$40 per \$100,000 of assessed value in annual property taxes. Citizens will have the opportunity to vote on each category separately.

If not done now, the cost for these needed projects in the future could be substantially more expensive. We urge you to educate yourself on these referendum issues, and we look forward to continuing to work with you on building a better Columbia County for us all!

The County will be conducting three Town Meetings to provide information on the projects to the citizens of the County. All are cordially invited and urged to come and learn about this bond referendum.

Thursday	September 21	Eubank Blanchard Community Center 6868 Cobbham Road - Appling	6 PM
Thursday	October 12	Evans Government Center Auditorium 630 Ronald Reagan Drive - Evans	6 PM
Thursday	October 26	Savannah Rapids Pavilion 3300 Evans-to-Locks Road - Martinez	6 PM

Further information is also available on our website at www.columbiacountyga.gov. If you have any questions, please feel free to call 706-868-3379 or e-mail us at bondinfo@columbiacountyga.gov.

Disclaimer: The intent of this booklet is to educate the public on the projects included in the Columbia County November 7, 2006 Bond Referendum.